



PERSONAL PROJECT: IL LIBRO DELLA FANTASIA
EVS Volunteering Programme 2022

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INTRODUCTION

On 15 January 2022, I started the EVS project in Matera, which is in the wider Basilicata region. During this programme, I collaborated with the educational association "Il Beccogiallo", which provides after-school activities for children 4-14 years old. Among the various tasks that the association provides, an important part is helping with children's homework as well as offering an important variety of creative activities such as storytelling, theatrical improvisation, creative games, yoga for children, music, puppet construction and others.

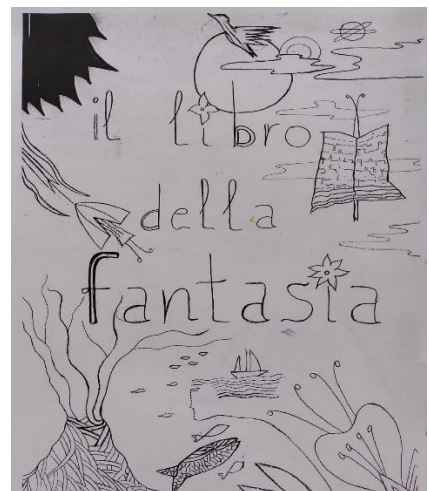
Through all these different types of activities, children are able to stimulate their imagination, enrich their psychological skills and learn how to participate as equal members of the community by taking on active roles. Social inclusion, integration and promotion of an open approach to knowledge, using tools of arts, science and non-formal education are the primary object of the organisation "Il Beccogiallo". In this context, I was able to contribute to the everyday work of the association for nine months and develop my personal project.



THE PERSONAL PROJECT: "IL LIBRO DELLA FANTASIA"

Il libro della fantasia ("The book of imagination") is an educational book-tool that really travels! The journey of this book began in 1973, when Gianni Rodari, a famous Italian writer, educator and journalist wrote the book "La Grammatica Della Fantasia" ("The grammar of imagination").

Thirty-four years later, in 2006, a Greek teacher named Tasos Pappas (Τάσος Παππάς), inspired by the book of Gianni Rodari, created an educational tool full of exercises of imagination and shared it with the children at the 65th primary school of Thessaloniki city. The result he mentions in the introduction of the book is that the children responded to this attempt with enthusiasm and inventiveness; they enjoyed solving these exercises, playing with words and creating their own stories. This has been the best example I have found of educational efforts, examples or projects inspired by the book of G.Rodari.



So, in 2022, this book “decided” to return to its homeland, Italy, and introduce itself to the children of Matera. Inspired by both Gianni Rodari and Tasos Pappas, we have chosen to use this book as a tool in order to play with the children of the association “Il Beccogiallo”.

HOW THE PROJECT WAS IMPLEMENTED

Phase 1: Reading the previous books

Before putting this project in action, we read the book “[La Grammatica Della Fantasia](#)” of Gianni Rodari (which we strongly recommend for reading such as all the books of Rodari!) and also “The Book of Imagination” ([Το βιβλίο της φαντασίας](#)), made by the Greek teacher Tasos Pappas and his students in Thessaloniki. What Tassos Pappas did was create some exercises of imagination in the form of word games or storytelling exercises and share them with the children, who managed to invent their own incredible adventures, mind-blowing fairytales and hilarious sentences. This tool was used by children in small groups who collaborated to respond in this challenge. The final result was a new book of imagination full of stories made up by these groups.

Phase 2: Creation of our own “Book of imagination” (“Il Libro Della Fantasia”).

Reading those two books, we were given all the inspiration we needed in order to create our own exercises of imagination and share them with the children of “Il Beccogiallo” association. We created new word games and storytelling exercises and began to design our book. In February 2022 I thought of and created this project at the beginning of the volunteering experience in Matera. The book was almost ready for use, but first we had to translate these made-up games from English to Italian. And of course, there was no one more capable to help us with this task than the children of “Il Beccogiallo”.

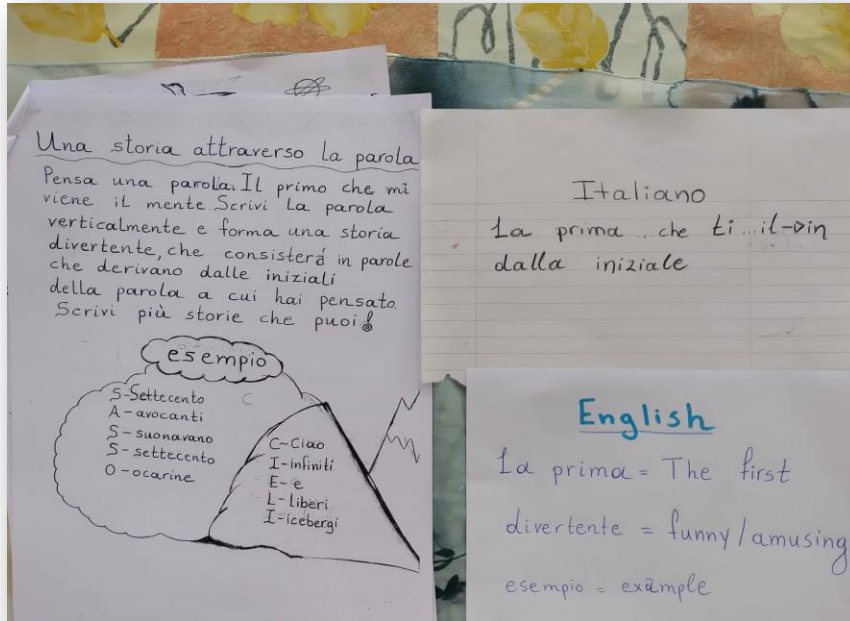
Phase 3: Translation of the book from English to Italian: A mutual learning pathway.

This step of the activity, which was completed during the first few months of the EVS programme, offered us the opportunity to be more familiar with the kids as well as exchange knowledge and ideas with them. Considering that when I first landed in Italy, I didn't speak Italian at all, I asked the children to help me translate the exercises of imagination from English to Italian. When the time allowed we started translating these new- born word games from English to Italian.

To be more specific, each time I asked a different student to help me with the translation of the book and he or she started translating or correcting my mistakes. Therefore, not only did this procedure help to improve and correct my Italian, but it was also an opportunity to know the

children better and introduce them to the English language.

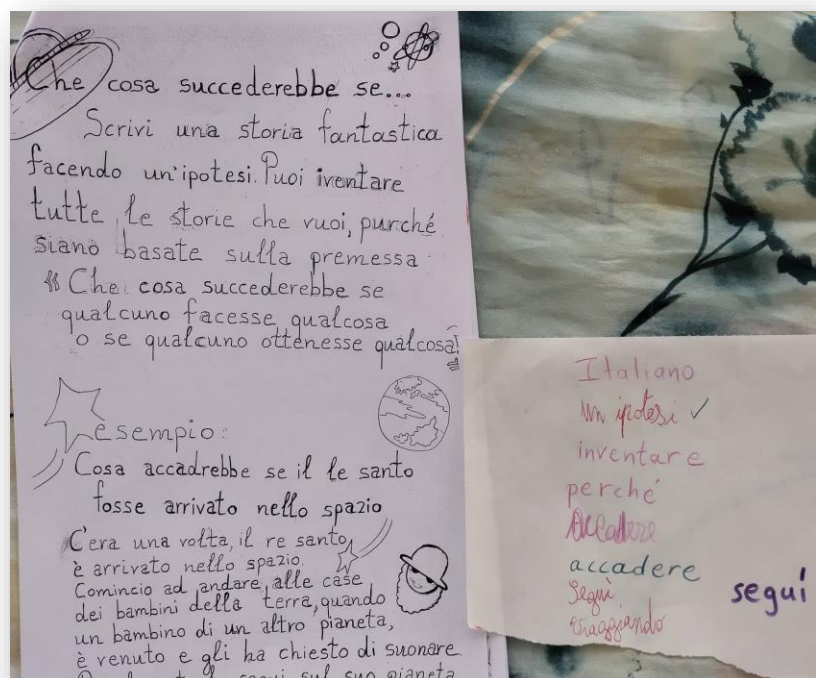
The method that I used was to write every Italian word I was not familiar with and then adjust it to the book. At the same time, I suggested to the students to take notes of the English words or sentences they didn't know and take it home to study. For every Italian word they taught me, I taught



them its counterpart in English, thus encouraging the mutual learning process.

This method enabled me and the kids to improve our language skills, exchange knowledge, have fun and also "make fun" of our mistakes in both languages. I would like to point out that this part of this personal project was the one that the children enjoyed the most, responding with enthusiasm and curiosity.

The correction of the language opened the way for the grammar of imagination.



Italiano

Un'ipotesi ✓

inventare

perché

Accadrebbe

accadere

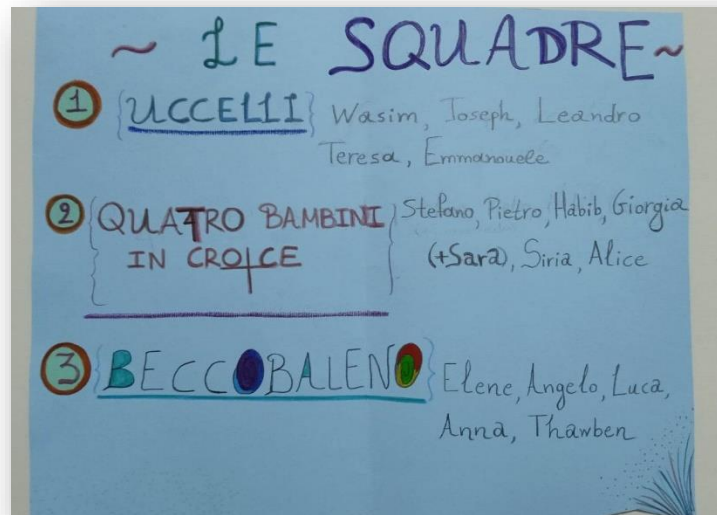
Segui

trastrandolo

seguì

Phase 4: *Playing with "The book of imagination" (Giocando con "il libro della fantasia")*

Since the book of imagination was ready for sharing, we asked the children to form their own groups and come up with a name for their group. The three groups that were formed were: "Gli Uccelli", "Quattro bambini in croce" and "Beccobaleno" and they can be seen in the following image:



The kids collaborated so as to respond to the exercises of imagination and they created their own imaginative words and small stories.

THE FINAL RESULT

The final result was the creation of our own book of imagination full of new words and inventive stories and it can be seen at the end of this article. Once again the children introduced us to the kingdom of imagination that appears in front of our surprising eyes each time they formed a sentence or a story together. They reminded us that the storytelling tradition is something that cannot vanish easily because storytelling is a fundamental part of the human condition. It comes naturally, it's used to make jokes, to make us laugh and cry, to express the worries, the fears, the desperation, to connect or disconnect us with the others, to communicate on the whole. The final book reminds us of all the moments when the inventive abilities of the children were shown, and for which we have no words to describe.

DIFFICULTIES AND LIMITATIONS

In order to fulfill the purposes of this article, we would like to refer to the difficulties and limitations we faced during this effort. First of all, using this tool to play with all the children simultaneously was something that didn't work well because both educators and kids had to put a lot of effort into understanding the exercises, concentrating and collaborating with each other. On the other hand, the tool worked better while we were working in small groups of one educator and 5-6 children. Every day we would pick another team to experiment and brainstorm based on these exercises of imagination. The groups responded positively by collaborating and creating their own stories. For this reason, it is an activity that we would suggest to be implemented with the form of small groups.

Another boundary in our way was the fact that it is an indoor activity which doesn't consider the crucial part of movement that other activities do. Last but not least, the language limitation appeared again because of the fact that the activities were actually exercises of imagination and word games, where the children were encouraged to experiment with the hidden abilities of their mother tongue. Therefore, a number of times the language was used in a symbolic manner. The fact that I'm not a native Italian speaker made me ask questions in order to understand the meaning of their words or sentences. In other cases, though, when this limitation was used wisely, it gave space for word-jokes and promoted the invention of stories.

In this phase of the project, we can claim that the limit of the language transforms into a possibility; a possibility for new stories made up in our own intercultural universe, where the languages and the people meet, interact and exchange stories, games and ideas. The inhabitants of this imaginative world offer the opportunity for new words as a means to amuse themselves through difference and variety. We hope that this "Book of Imagination", made in Matera, will entertain the readers as well.

CONCLUSION

One of the most important lessons the children taught us during this project is that when the limits are used as advantages, and not as barriers, they give birth to new possibilities, break new grounds and bring us to new skies yet untraveled, yet unknown.

Last but not least, I would like to thank all the children of "Beccogiallo" that taught me new words and phrases in Italian and so much more through their hearts and creativity; the educators who introduced me to a new atmosphere as well as Matera and its people that welcomed and supported me during this journey.

To all of them and...

To all the limits turned into advantages.

il libro

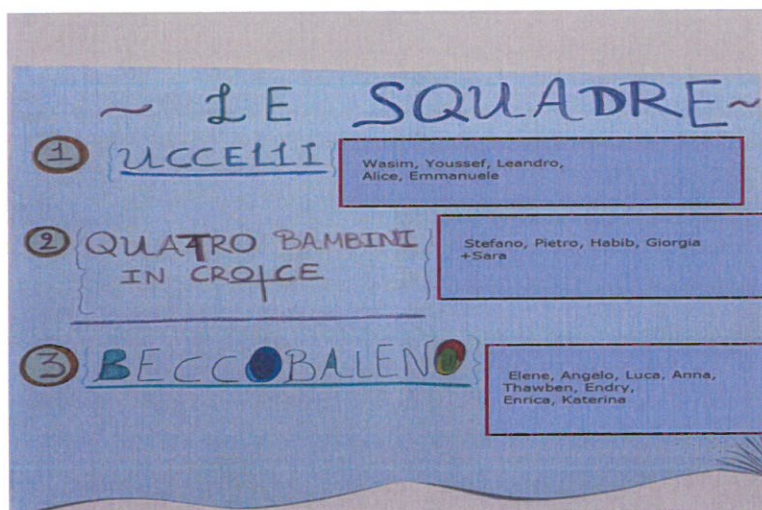
della

fantasia



LE SQUADRE

| UCCELLI | QUATTRO BAMBINI IN CROCE | BECCOBALENO |
|-----------|--------------------------|-------------|
| Wasim | Stefano | Elene |
| Youssef | Pietro | Angelo |
| Siria | Habib | Luca |
| Leandro | Giorgia | Anna |
| Alice | +Sara | Thawben |
| Emmanuele | | Endry |
| | | Enrica |
| | | Katerina |



Una storia attraverso la parola

Pensa una parola, la prima che ti viene in mente. Scrivi la parola verticalmente e forma una storia divertente, che consisterá in parole che derivano dalla iniziale (della parola) a cui hai pensato. Scrivi piú storie che puoi!

esempio

S-Settecento
A-arvocati
S-suonavano
S-settecento
O-oboe

C-Ciao
I-infiniti
E-e
L-liberi
I-iceberg

Stefano(NON, VOGLIO, STUDIARE)

| | | |
|---------|--------------|----------------|
| N on | V iaggio | S to |
| | O ndeggiando | T irando |
| O dio | G irando | U n |
| | L iberamente | D ado |
| N iente | I n | I n |
| | O bliquo | A ria |
| | | R espingendo |
| | | E nergicamente |

Leandro (CAMILLA)

C antavo
A mmirevolmente
M entre
I o
L entamente
L anciavo
A quilone

Wasim (NESSUNO)

N ell'
E quilibrio
S enza
S civolare
U ccelli
N ascondono
O scurandosi

Siria (SCUOLA,VIA)

| | |
|---------------|------------|
| S tavo | V ado |
| C ercando | |
| U n | I n |
| O recchino | |
| L uminoso | A ntartide |
| A ffascinante | |

Youssef (CIAO, LEANDRO)

| | |
|-------------|--------------|
| C arlotta | L eone |
| | 'E |
| I rene | A ndato |
| | N ascondendo |
| A ngelo | D iamanti |
| | R isalendo |
| O ndeggiano | O vunque |

Alice (PENNA)

P apà
E ntra
N ella
N ave
A mericana



Che cosa succederebbe se...

Scrivi una storia fantastica facendo un'ipotesi. Puoi inventare tutte le storie che vuoi, purché siano basate sulla premessa

« Che cosa succederebbe se qualcuno facesse qualcosa o se qualcuno ottenesse qualcosa? »



Esempio:



Cosa succederebbe se Babbo Natale arrivasse dallo spazio

C'era una volta, Babbo Natale arrivato dallo spazio.

Cominciò ad andare nelle case dei bambini della Terra.



Un giorno incontrò un bambino di un altro pianeta che era caduto sulla Terra.

Babbo Natale lo seguì sul suo pianeta e viaggiarono insieme nello spazio.



Cosa succederebbe se tutti i bambini avessero i super poteri ?

C'era un bambino che aveva scoperto di avere dei super poteri. Un giorno è andato a scuola e ha visto che tutti i bambini avevano i super poteri. All'inizio hanno trasformato la maestra in una gatta. Poi, hanno iniziato a distruggere la scuola usando i loro poteri di invisibilità e teletrasporto per non essere visti dalle maestre. Hanno spaccato anche con un pugno il muro della scuola.

All'improvviso, hanno visto un mostro enorme entrare nella scuola, e hanno usato i loro poteri per ucciderlo. Con il potere del vento hanno creato un tornado che ha portato via il mostro. Alla fine sono rimasti senza poteri ma hanno capito che il loro potere non sono i super poteri ma l'unità della squadra.

Quattro bambini in croce

Cosa succederebbe se la Terra esplodesse? —

Se la Terra esplodesse, andremmo alla Nasa, prenderemmo una nave spaziale e andremmo a vivere su Marte. Là non troveremmo ossigeno perché su Marte c'è poco ossigeno, ma troveremmo un materiale rosso che porteremmo con noi e continueremmo a viaggiare.

Poi andremmo sulla Luna dove troveremmo sassi e acqua fatta di pietre. Una volta arrivati sulla Luna avremmo iniziato a costruire letti di pietre. Erano molto comodi e abbiamo fatto la nanna. Quando ci siamo svegliati abbiamo trovato un materiale giallo e lo abbiamo portato con noi.

Poi siamo andati su Giove, abbiamo trovato un materiale grigio e bianco e abbiamo iniziato a costruire i tavoli. Erano abbastanza belli quei tavoli e li abbiamo portati con noi, come tutti questi materiali che abbiamo trovato nello Spazio. Poi abbiamo deciso di tornare sulla Terra.

Sorprendentemente la Terra si era riformata! Tutti i paesi erano fusi insieme! Immaginate come se il Marocco si unisse con l'Italia! La mappa è diventata come se il mondo avesse da sempre una storia comune. E noi abbiamo portato tutti questi materiali per rendere la Terra ancora più ricca.

E ora andiamo al Becco!
Ciao!

Gli Uccelli

LE FIABE A ROYESCIO



Riscrivere un racconto familiare
invertendo ruoli situazioni e trama.

Per esempio Cappuccetto Rosso è
cattiva e il lupo è buono e spaventato.

CHE COSA ACCADE DOPO



Continuare un racconto
familiare, iniziando da dove
si era interrotto, poco
prima di «e vissero felici e contenti»

C'era una volta Cappuccetto Rosso che cominciò ad andare verso la casa della nonna. Mentre stava attraversando una foresta, vide un lupo, durante una tempesta. Non disse niente, neanche una parola, e continuò a camminare verso la casa della nonna.

Sua nonna aprì la porta della casa che sembrava come una grotta! Faceva freddo, indossavano ancora i giubbotti e per mangiare non avevano neanche i biscotti! La nonna disse:

"Ma che possiamo fare? Ho fame ma non ho niente da mangiare!"

Allora, Cappuccetto Rosso siccome era un po' cattiva rispose:

-Nonna mia, un'idea mi è venuta.. il lupo mangiamo con olio, frutta e una spremuta!

Vado io nella foresta per portarlo dentro e fare una festa! Una festa di cibo, una festa tra noi, il lupo mangiamo e saremo sazi poi!-

Cappuccetto Rosso arrivò nella foresta, trovò il lupo e disse con voce tranquilla come una camomilla:

-Ma lupo caro, che ci fai qua? In mezzo al freddo, in mezzo all'oscurità? Vieni a farci compagnia, a raccontarci le storie, a stare insieme al caldo e in simpatia? Vuoi venire a casa di nonna, dove abbiamo un camino, castagne e atmosfera buona?-

Il lupo disse di "sì: Ma chi potrebbe resistere a una proposta bella così?"

Camminando camminando arrivarono a casa canticchiando.. Appena entrati, si sedettero vicino al camino per scaldarsi le mani e il loro nasino. Ma Cappuccetto Rosso stava pensando "come faccio a cucinarlo? Forse lo spingo dentro il camino, forse lo brucio e dopo lo cucino..."

A quel punto il lupo iniziò a raccontare delle storie incredibili che nessuna delle due aveva mai ascoltato.. Iniziò a narrare delle favole, creando tanta magia e a usare le parole come poesia..

Cappuccetto e la nonna erano incantate, non potevano fare più niente perché si sentivano amate! Alla fine, diventarono tutti amici: Il lupo buono, Cappuccetto Rosso, la nonna e tutti quanti vicino a loro diventarono amici del cuore, amici d'argento, amici d'oro.

Beccobaleno
(con le maestre)